

**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Virginia*

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*Paul J. McNulty  
United States Attorney*

*2100 Jamieson Avenue (703)299-3700  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314*

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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For further information contact  
Sam Dibbley 703- 842-4050

Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, and James Letten, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana, announced that Montreal Fox, 31 of Avondale, Louisiana, waived formal Indictment and pled guilty today before the Honorable Mary Ann Vail Lemmon, United States District Judge in the Eastern District of Louisiana, to a single count Information charging him with criminal copyright infringement. Judge Lemmon set sentencing for July 28, 2004.

Fox is one of nine individuals being prosecuted for distribution of pirated computer software after an eight month investigation by the FBI. The investigation, identified as "Operation Cybernet," targeted individuals nationwide for operating computer sites on the Internet that illegally distributed pirated copies of software, movies, games and music. These individuals advertised their computer sites in the Usenet newsgroup "alt.2600.warez" and various Internet relay chat channels dedicated to the trafficking of pirated software. Operation Cybernet culminated on July 24, 2001, with the simultaneous execution of nine search warrants in various parts of the country.

The operation specifically targeted violators of the No Electronic Theft ("NET") Act, a 1997 law which makes it illegal to reproduce or distribute on a large scale copyrighted works, such as software programs, even if the defendant acts without a commercial purpose or for private financial gain. The NET Act was enacted by Congress to combat the growing threat of piracy over the Internet in light of the realization that a significant amount of online criminal copyright infringement involves the free downloading of pirated software, games, movies and music from warez sites. Defendant Fox admitted operating a warez FTP server from a personal computer located in Avondale, Louisiana, where he resided at the time of the investigation.

The Cybernet investigation was conducted by the FBI's Washington Field Office and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Scott J. Stein from the Eastern District of Virginia, James Mann, from the Eastern District of Louisiana and Clement McGovern from the Computer Crimes and Intellectual Property Section of the Department of Justice. The defendant was originally charged in the Eastern District of Virginia by way of a Criminal Complaint filed on January 15, 2004, and with the consent of the Eastern District of Louisiana, the case was transferred to the Eastern District of Louisiana for disposition.

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